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The history, linguistic development, and chief characteristics of the French, German, Italian, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish languages are presented in short, informative sketches as guidelines for foreign language study. The article also briefly analyzes major literary works and cultural highlights of areas where the languages are spoken. (DS)

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FOREIGN LANGUAGES: A NEEDED EMPHASIS IN AMERICA

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Foreword

Never in the history of our country has there been a greater need for persons skilled in the use of foreign languages than now. The Second World War brought the United States into contact with most of the peoples of the world and events since then have only served to emphasize the shrinking dimensions of the globe and the increasing part our country is destined to play in world affairs. With modern methods of travel, no country is more than twenty-four hours away; oral communication is usually as close as the nearest telephone. Lands that once seemed remote are our neighbors now.

The twentieth-century jet-age world offers a challenge and an opportunity to young Americans who possess the background and skills that have made our country famous, but who also know foreign languages and how to work successfully with people of other lands. Business, industry, government service, education, journalism and other occupations are calling for them in ever-increasing numbers.

Six important modern foreign languages – French, German, Italian, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish – are discussed briefly in the following pages. A few facts are given about the origin and development of each, its special characteristics and principal values. It is hoped that these profiles willfurnish students and educators preliminary guidance as they consider the thrilling and rewarding experience of foreign language study.

Practical considerations have limited the number of languages here discussed to the six mentioned above. Although such oriental tongues as Chinese, Japanese and Hindi are rapidly growing in importance for Westerners, trained teachers and instructional materials for most of them are limited and make their introduction into American schools and colleges difficult at the present time.

FRENCH

We all know that French is the language of France. We may not realize, however, that it is also the language of the extensive French Community of Nations, of Belgium, Switzerland, Haiti and an important part of Canada – all told, many millions of persons living in widely separated parts of the world.

To Americans, French is not an entirely foreign language, for much of our English vocabulary is derived from it. Here are a few French words with which we are all familiar: *introduction, observation, voyage, journal, train, continue, commerce.* Their spelling and meaning are the same in both languages.

In 1066 the French-speaking Normans conquered England with the result that for more than two hundred years French was the official language of England and was spoken by educated people and the ruling classes. Thus English is largely a mixture of words of French and Anglo-Saxon origin.

French is called a "Romance" language because it is derived from Latin, the language of Roma, the Latin name for Rome. Of the major Romance languages, French is the one that has changed most from the ancestral Latin. A word like the Latin *capra*, "goat", which continues to be *capra* in Italian, would still be easily recognized by an ancient Roman in its modern Spanish form, *cabra.* But would that same ancient Roman recognize the French cognate, "*chèvre*"? Perhaps not.

Before France was conquered by the Romans under Julius Caesar (58-55 B.C.), it was a dark land of primitive tribes. After the decline of the Roman Empire, the Franks, a Teutonic people, overran the country and gradually developed a simplified form of Latin in two dialects, that of the North (langue d'oil) becoming modern French. The first great literary monument of the language was the *Chanson de Roland* or *Song of Roland,* which is built around the epic deeds of Charlemagne and his knights. It tells of Roland, a nephew of the Emperor, and his heroic defense of Christianity against the Saracens. This epic was composed toward the end of the eleventh century in what is known as Old French.

Old French gave way about 1300 A.D. to Middle French, the language of the Renaissance and early modern periods. The Renaissance was characterized by a new zest for life and literature. François Villon, a rollicking poet, vagabond and rogue, lived at this time. His ballads and rondeaux are marked by gaiety, tenderness and a concern with death. Before Villon, French was a language of heavy harsh sounds, like German. Gradually it evolved into a tongue of grace, refinement and clarity, the French that we use today.

During the sixteenth century, as the centralization of France progressed under the kings, the language continued to gain in dignity and power. The *Essays* of Michel de Montaigne, written during the period, reflect the life and thought of those exhilarating times.

The seventeenth century is the "Grand Siècle", the classic age, the day of brilliant and formal court life at the palaces of Versailles and the Louvre, with France leading Europe in politics, art and letters. It was at this time that Jean de la Fontaine wrote his delightful *Fables*, Corneille his great tragedies and Molière his brilliant, satirical comedies.

Though it is impossible to mention here, even in rapid outline, all the periods of French literature, it is perhaps appropriate to recall one or two additional authors whose names are written with golden letters in the history of world literature. Victor Hugo, both as a poet and novelist, dominates the nineteenth century. *Les Miserables* is his masterpiece. Proust, *(Remembrance of Things Past)*, and Gide, *(Straight is the Gate)*, in our own century have distinguished themselves as masters of the novel, especially the psychological novel.

Now for a practical hint or two about spoken French: the French, in speaking, tend to run their words together in such a way that the phrase or sentence, rather than the word, is the unit of speech, as well as of understanding to the listener. Final written consonants are normally silent. This makes spoken French a language of significant prefixes rather than of meaningful endings and sets it apart from English, Spanish, Italian or German.

For nearly 2000 years the French have been leaders in the life of Europe. They have made many important contributions to Western civilization. When you study French, you become acquainted with the achievements of great Frenchmen, not only in literature but in science, music and art as well.

French is an international language. Almost anywhere you go in the world you can converse with cultured people if you speak it. It is widely used in diplomatic intercourse, as well as in international cultural and business activities. When you visit France you will find that your knowledge of the native tongue is a source of unending satisfaction and pleasure.

But if you remain at home it will also serve you well. With it you will have a better insight into the world of fashion. You can dine in a charming restaurant and order from an elaborate menu intelligently and without hesitation. Then suppose you have seats for the opera — *Thais, Faust, Manon, La Boheme?* All these, whether you see them or hear them on radio, television or recordings, become much more enjoyable. At home you can read French books, newspapers and the fascinating Parisian magazines. Your life will be more purposeful if you have a knowledge of the language and civilization of the brilliant, industrious and sometimes unpredictable French people.

GERMAN

Since the Second World War great numbers of alert Americans and other English speaking people are learning German and have restored it to its former position as one of the most studied of foreign languages. There are many reasons for their interest in this useful and expressive tongue.

First, German is one of the most widely distributed of the major European languages. It is, of course, the official language of the West German Republic, East Germany and Austria. It is also much spoken in Switzerland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, the Netherlands and Scandinavia – by a grand total of approximately 120,000,000 persons. Several millions of German immigrants and their descendants in North and South America are today better reached in German than through any other language.

Secondly, Germany, Austria and Switzerland are lands of beauty and achievement, rich in the inspiration of a historic background and centuries of Western culture. They have long been famous for their commercial and industrial development, their cultivation of the fine arts— especially music and drama – and their intellectual and educational leadership.

Then too, Central Europe has tempting rewards for the traveler. Its great cities–

Berlin, Munich, Vienna – with their historical buildings, their famous hotels and restaurants, and the enchanting country of the Rhine, the Black Forest and the Alps, make a visit to these lands a cherished memory.

An astonishingly large number of German words have the same or almost the same, form as in English: Dollar (Thaler), May (Mai), Hamburger, Kindergarten and Sauerkraut are but a few. German pronounciation, too, has many points of similarity with English and presents relatively few difficulties to the English speaker. Mark Twain once said that any American can speak German if he wants to.

German grammar retains the four official Germanic cases (nominative, genitive, dative, accusative), but the distinction among them appears in the article *(the, a* or *an)* rather than in the form of the noun itself, as occurs in Latin. The gender of German nouns is sometimes unpredictable – take, for example, the three common table utensils: the spoon is *der Loffel*, Masculine; the fork is *die Gabel*, feminine; the knife is *das Messer*, neuter. Several interesting schemes exist for learning the gender of nouns.

Printed German frequently makes use of the Black Letter or Gothic alphabet, which was formerly current in England also. It is decorative and lends itself to many artistic variations in books and lettered signs. In German, usually all nouns, both proper and common, are capitalized. In this it differs from the Romance languages which tend to use a minimum of capitals. German word order – one says, for instance, "I have a letter already written" – has been repeatedly satirized by English and American humorists, but follows its own rules rather closely. When these are mastered, the problem becomes a minor one.

Yiddish (from *judisch*, Jewish) is a variant of German which goes back to the German Jewish communities of the Middle Ages and has been generally adopted by the North European Jews as a language of common intercourse. Although written with a modified Hebrew alphabet, and in America generously sprinkled with English words, it is still fundamentally German of the Renaissance period.

Many of the enduring works of world literature are written in German – Goethe's *Faust*, Schiller's *Wilhelm Tell*, Heine's lyric poems, the philosophical works of Kant, Schopenhauer, Hegel and Nietzsche, to mention only a few. In addition to these classics, modern writers like Thomas Mann, *(The Magic Mountain)*, Franz Werfel, *(The Song of Bernadette)*, and Erich Maria Remarque, *(All Quiet on the Western Front)*, have produced works in German that make fascinating reading.

German and Austrian music boasts numerous masterpieces and an understanding of the language adds a new dimension of pleasure when we hear operas like Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte (The Magic Flute)* or Wagner's *Lohengrin*. Johann Sebastian Bach, Johannes Brahms, Schumann, Haydn and other distinguished composers brought the German–Austrian school of music to a rare perfection equaled only by the Italians.

In science, German discoveries have contributed enormously to the development of the modern scientific–industrial world: Johann Gutenberg, pioneer printer; Johannes Kepler, astronomer; Gabriel Fahrenheit, physicist, who made the first mercury thermometer; William Konrad Rontgen, discoverer of x-rays; and Rudolf Diesel, inventor of the engine that bears his name, are but a few of a long list of brilliant and original scientists. In American universities a reading knowledge of German is usually required of candidates for the doctor's degree, because of its value in research, especially scientific research.

Goethe once said, speaking of foreign language study, "He who knows two languages has two souls". This is particularly true if one of the languages is German.

ITALIAN

Italy is one of the oldest countries in Europe. For nearly three thousand years her influence on European and world history has been enormous and enduring. Her influence on architecture, sculpture and painting, all the arts and sciences, has affected their development the world over, beginning with the Etruscans and Romans before the Christian era and then, after a lull, continuing in the Renaissance and modern age. This lovely land, washed by three seas and traversed by magical mountains, offers the traveler not only the finest in art treasures and historical monuments, but a charming contemporary world as well. In Rome, Florence, Venice, Capri, and on the Riviera, life is gay and varied, with many activities competing for the visitor's time.

The Italian – and there are two distinct types: the northerner, fair complexioned, and the southerner, more swarthy of skin and Mediterranean in tempera-

ment – is essentially an individualist who expresses his personality in everything that he does, whether it be in building a house that is just a little different from his neighbor's, or in running his business as he chooses. The Italian is also a romantic and believes happiness is achieved by the sheer joy of living. He loves good music, good food, good wine and the other pleasures of life. Since he is a warm-hearted individual, he welcomes foreigners to his sunny land and, if given the opportunity, goes to unusual lengths to help them enjoy their stay.

In a sense, contemporary Italy is one of the youngest nations in Europe. After centuries of foreign rule, it was united into a kingdom by the royal House of Savoy and Garibaldi at the time of the Franco-Prussian War in 1870. In 1946, at the close of the Second World War, it became a republic. Its population is about 50 million, but an additional 8 or 10 million persons in Switzerland, Africa, North and South America also speak Italian. In New York, Sao Paulo and Buenos Aires entire communities speak and understand Italian almost as well as the local language.

Italian is a language of smooth sounds and comparatively simple, phonetic spelling. Double consonants – like *tt* in *fatto*– occur frequently, but are easy to pronounce when one remembers that a double consonant is uttered simply by holding the breath for an instant before releasing the consonant sound. It is not always easy, however, to know exactly on what syllable the accent falls in an Italian word. Spanish, by contrast, has clear-cut rules for stress. The fact that Italian uses vowel endings for practically all its words and seldom has difficult consonant groups within a word, makes it an ideal language for singing purposes and for certain types of declamation.

Italian grammar has a certain quality of looseness which makes for elasticity and expressiveness but which may be slightly confusing to the beginning student. In French, for example, "I don't think that he will come" is *je ne crois pas qu'il vienne*, with an obligatory subjunctive in the subordinate clause. In Italian one has the choice between *non credo que venga*, with the subjunctive, and *non credo que verra*, with the future indicative. The rules for the agreement of the past participle in French are quite arbitrary, but in Italian are delightfully vague. The native lets himself be guided by his instinctive sense of fitness, but the foreigner develops this sense through a careful study of the language.

The Italian vocabulary is more predominantly Latin than those of the other Romance languages. In fact it remains amazingly close to the ancestral tongue, especially in the scholarly and literary vocabulary. The story is told of a high school student in Italy who, having been assigned to compose a Latin poem, appeared the next day in class and read off some lines of verse which caused the class to titter and the professor to remark critically, "Perhaps you forgot that the assignment was for a piece of *Latin* poetry?" "But my verses are Latin, sir", replied the student in an aggrieved tone. After a careful rereading, the professor was forced to apologize. The verses were perfectly good *Latin*, and, at the same time, perfectly good *Italian*. Here they are:

Te Saluto, Alma Dea, Dea Generosa,
O Gloria Nostra, O Veneta Regina!
In Procelloso Turbine Funesto
Tu Regnasti Serena; Mille Membra
Intrepida Prostrasti In Pugna Acerba;
Per Te Miser Non Fui, Per Te Non Gemo,
Vivo En Pace Per Te. Regna, O Beata!
Regna In Prospera Sorte, In Pompa
Augusta,
In Perpetuo Splendore, In Aurea Sede!
Tu Serena, Tu Placida, Tu Pia
Tu Benigna. Me Salva, Ama, Conserva!

No other country of Europe can match Italy's record of continuous creative activity, which in the course of centuries has transformed the whole peninsula into an immense – though very lively – museum. Each generation has left a rich legacy behind it. In literature, the Renaissance began with Dante's *Divine Comedy*, Petrarch's *Sonnets* and Boccacio's *Decameron*. Among the brightest stars of this age were Machiavelli, *(The Prince)*, Torquato Tasso, *(Jerusalem Delivered)*, and Ariosto, (*Orlando Insane*). In recent years there has also been much literary activity and many fine works have been written by such authors as Luigi Pirandello, (*Six Characters in Search of an Author*), Ignazio Silone, (*Bread and Wine*), and Carlo Levi, (*Christ Stopped at Eboli*).

Since the Second World War the Italian cinema has attained a position of high artistic perfection. Many Italian films have been shown in the United States. An understanding of the language enables one to fully enjoy the pathos and humor of these films without having to depend on dubbed-in translations or English subtitles.

In Italy art is everywhere. On every hand we find triumphal arches, mosaics, churches, palaces, piazzas and fountains from which we unconsciously learn to distinguish the beauties of Roman, Byzantine, Romanesque, Gothic and Renaissance art.

Music is almost as inescapable as art. From the Gregorian chant of the vast cathedrals to the Neapolitan folk tunes sung by the masses, music is the native expression of piety and happiness. And how much the world has been enriched and inspired by the *operas* – the very word is Italian – of such masters as Puccini, (*Madame Butterfly*), Leoncavallo, (*Cavalleria Rusticana*), and Verdi, (*Aida, Il Trovatore*)!

In modern Italian the language of Rome and her successors lives on. While our Western civilization endures, it will never die.

PORTUGUESE

A large prize was once won on a TV quiz program by a contestant who fortunately knew that Portuguese – not Spanish – is the language of Brazil, although some persons still believe that Latin America is synonymous with Spanish America. Brazil, a country about the size of the United States, covers half of South America and has a population of 75,000,000. Portugal, the mother country, together with her vast African (Angola, Mozambique), Atlantic (Madeira, Cape Verde, Azores Islands), and Asiatic (Goa, Macau) possessions, has a population of nearly 23,000,000. Furthermore, the three million inhabitants of Galicia in northwestern Spain speak a dialect which is, to all intents, Portuguese. In fact, Galicia was the birthplace of the Portuguese language and Galician or *Gallego* had already reached a high stage of development when Castilian Spanish was still only a rude military tongue. The courtly lyric poetry of Galicia was recited and sung at the Castilian court until the early fifteenth century.

From the above it is evident that many more people speak Portuguese than Italian, for instance, and that the Portuguese-Brazilian world is broad and cosmopolitan, somewhat like the French Union or the British Commonwealth.

It has been said that Portuguese and Spanish are so similar that the person who speaks one automatically knows the other. This is hardly true, in spite of certain marked similarities. Notice the following list of high frequency words, and how different the Spanish and Portuguese translations are:

English	Spanish	Portuguese
street	calle	rua
window	ventana	janela
hat	sombrero	chapeu
yesterday	ayer	ontem
to dine	comer	jantar

If Portuguese pronunciation is more complex than Spanish, it is largely due to the nasalized vowel sounds which also abound in French, but do not exist in Castilian. Then too, spelling is not so phonetic as in Spanish and Italian. In this, Portuguese again resembles French or English. In the interest of linguistic unity, scholars from Portugal and Brazil meet from time to time to discuss and resolve differences in spelling, pronunciation and grammar. The results of these conferences are later made public in linguistic treaties or pacts between the two nations which are signed and ratified with diplomatic protocol.

In structure and vocabulary Portuguese shows strong Roman and medieval characteristics. No other Romance language still breaks up the future and conditional tenses into their component parts – the infinitive plus the verb *to have* – and no other Latin language uses the personalized infinitive (*parti depois deles terem falado*, "I left after they had spoken", literally, "I left after they-to-have spoken). The Brazilian vocabulary, like our American English, is influenced by Indian and Negro admixtures: the names of such dances as *samba*, *conga* and *mambo* are of African origin, as is the word *zumbi* (ghost), which in English becomes "zombie". Brazilians have not hesitated to borrow words from us too. A street car, which in Portugal is *carro eletrico*, becomes *bonde* in Rio. The first street cars were financed by a North American issue of bonds and the name of the financing device stuck to the product.

The national poet of Portugal is Luis de Camoens, who is to his country what Cervantes is to Spain. His masterpiece, *Os Lusiadas (The Lusiads*, that is, *The Portuguese)* tells the epic story of Vasco da Gama and how he discovered the sea route to India in the sixteenth century. In the nineteenth century Alexandre Herculano (*The Voice of the Prophet, The Cistercian Monk)* and Jose Maria Eca de Queiroz (*The Maias, From the City to the Mountains*) earned a reputation both within and outside their native land as masters of history and prose fiction.

Brazilian writers of today are a vigorous and restless group, who are blazing new trails in Latin American literature. José Lins do Rego has written an impressive series of novels about the sugar cane and tobacco country of the tropical Northeast (*Plantation Boy, The Sugar Mill*). With a technique resembling that of the motion picture cameraman, Erico Verissimo brings to his readers the romance and drama of life in the big cities (*Crossroads, Behold the Lillies of the Field, Faraway Music*). Manuel Bandeira's *Ashes of Hours* and other volumes of superbly modern verse place him in the front rank of contemporary poets.

Keys to the Portuguese character are gentleness and courtesy, extreme cleanliness, hard work and tenacity. A broad tolerance, both racial and religious, is proverbial. No other European nation has been longer in constant contact with Africans, Asiatics and Americans and none has managed its affairs with more basic honesty and less violence. Not without reason have the Portuguese been called the Anglo-Saxons of the Latin world: for centuries they have been expert sailors and have developed an extensive system of overseas possessions well administered, with order and progress. Though Brazil is a melting pot of races and nationalities, most of the basic Portuguese characteristics prevail there.

Statesmen and sociologists agree that Brazil, the fourth largest country of the world, will play an increasingly important role in hemispheric and world affairs. This land of exhuberant vegetation, of silver beaches fringed with palms, of rainbow-hued gardens and splashing waterfalls is also an inexhaustible treasure house of resources and raw materials. Its population and industrial potential are rapidly increasing. Already both Rio and Sao Paulo have populations in excess of 3,000,000, this second city being the largest manufacturing center of Latin America. Brazil supplies about one half of the world's coffee and great quantities of cotton, cacao, carnauba wax and brazil nuts. Its high-grade iron ore reserves (Itabira) are the largest in the world. Its rivers hold the restless power of twenty million horses. It leads in the production of manganese, bauxite and commercial quartz. Diamonds, gold and semi-precious stones abound in the states of Goiaz, Minas Gerais and Bahia.

Americans can take pride in the considerable part that our country has had in the economic development of this Colossus of the South and in the long tradition of friendship that unites the two countries. It is to be regretted that the Portuguese language and Luso-Brazilian culture are not more widely studied and better known in the United States.

RUSSIAN

Almost three times the size of the United States and comprising about one sixth of the world's land surface, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics stretches across Europe and Asia, from the Baltic to the Sea of Japan and the Bering Strait. Its total population is in excess of 210,000,000, although somewhat less than this number speak Great Russian, as the official language is called. The Soviet Government does not compel its citizens to use Great Russian, but allows them to freely speak the other tongues that are current in various parts of the Union.

Russian, though little known in America, is strangely beautiful, superbly flexible and so rich in vocabulary and syntax that it translates other languages easily and readily takes over the classics of the other nations of the world.

The Russian system of writing, though quite different from English, is a sensible and fairly phonetic one. It was devised by the Greek bishops Cyril and Methodius, who in the ninth century brought the Gospel to the heathen Slavs. In it the Greek influence is apparent.

The Russian vocabulary is predominately Slavic, and related, though not too closely, to the three great language groups that make up our English vocabulary: the Germanic, the Latin-Romance and the Greek. To cite several examples of this kinship: the Russian word for "house", *dom*, is easily recognizable as akin to the Latin "domus", from which we have gotten "dome" and "domicile." The Russian verb "to give", *dat'* is the Latin *dare;* the Russian verb "to see", *vidyet'*, is the Latin *videre*, from which we get "visible" and "video".

A fair number of Russian words are already familiar to Americans, such as: *Kremlin (*from *kreml*, "citadel" or "fortress"), *vodka (*"little water", the diminuative of *voda* "water"); *tovarishch* ("comrade"); *Soviet* (the Russian word for "council", referring to the councils of soldiers and workmen's delegates that ruled Russia after the fall of Kerensky). Many Russian words are picturesque when literally translated: "railroad" is "iron road" and "fountain-pen" is "self-writing pen". Russians often display both a sense of humor and a sense of poetry in

their speech. One frequent reply to "How are things?" rhymes with the question and means "as nice as soot is white".

Russian grammar may seem involved to the English-speaking learner, though it is probably no more so than Latin which is studied by thousands of our high school students. Nouns and adjectives have six cases: nominative, genitive, dative, accusative, instrumental and locative. This means that in speaking or writing there is a continual shift of endings. An illiterate Russian will probably correct you if you make a mistake in a case ending, even though he may not know the grammatical rule involved or, for that matter, the names of the cases.

Russian was given literary standing during the reign of Peter the Great (1672-1725). A literature of world importance did not, however, appear until the early years of the nineteenth century. In the interval between 1800 and our own day, several giants have wielded their pens in Russian; we should, at least, be familiar with their names.

Alexander Pushkin (1799-1837) gave the first impetus to the national literature. He is known best for his *Boris Godunov*, a historical drama. The *Inspector-General* is an excellent comedy by Nikolai Gogol (1809-1852). In *Dead Souls* Gogol satirically depicts Russian society while in *Taras Bulba* he has written a realistic war novel.

Feodor Dostoevski (1821-1881) wrote *Poor Folk* when he was twenty-four years old, "with passion and almost with tears". *Crime and Punishment* was the masterwork of his later years – after his terrible experiences as a prisoner in Siberia. Of his novels, *The Brothers Karamazov* is most powerful. Dostoevski's concern is with the psychology of tormented, impassioned persons.

Leo Tolstoy (1828-1910) is probably the best-known of all Russian writers. He stands beside Ibsen and Goethe as a creative genius. His *War and Peace*, one of the great historical novels of all time, is a prose epic of Russia during the Napoleonic period.

Although Maxim Gorki (1868-1936) is widely known in other fields than in that of drama, in *The Lower Depths* he has drawn a picture of submerged humanity of unusual power and intensity. Of the writers who have developed since the Russian Revolution, Mikhail Sholokhov is distinctive for his panoramic novel *The Silent Don*, dealing with the struggles of a Cossack youth during the turbulent events of the revolutionary period.

Although the study of Russian has been much neglected in American schools, there are signs that this situation is now changing, especially in the high schools. A May, 1958, survey revealed that 33 high schools are now teaching Russian, 8 more are definitely planning to add it in 1958 and 60 others are interested. A total of about 5000 Americans are now studying Russian. As an example of the Soviet Union's enormous respect for our language, millions of Russian secondary school students are studying English.

When the Soviet Union launched Sputnik I on October 4, 1957, the advanced stage of Russian science and technology was evident and the sobering implications for America and the West became clear. An estimated two percent of all our scientists can read Russian effectively. Our Government translates only about 30 of the 1200 scientific journals published in the Soviet Union. In contrast, the Soviet Government has a permanent staff of 2,300 translators and abstractors, who, assisted by thousands of part-time linguists, have been assigned to translate, abstract and index more than 1,400 of the 1,800 scientific journals published in the United States.

This information indicates that in the field of science Russian rivals German and French in importance. Leading American scientists say that more technical material is now being written in Russian than in any other language except English. Dr. Gerhard H. Dieke, Chairman of the Department of Physics of the Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, stated in February, 1958: "If I were a student now, I certainly would learn Russian."

SPANISH

Spanish, one of the two great languages of the Western Hemisphere, is spoken by approximately 175,000,000 persons in the mother country and eighteen far-flung Latin American republics. The part played by Spain in the discovery and colonization of America, the nearness of the Spanish-speaking countries to the United States, and the rapidly increasing political, economic and cultural importance of Spanish America recommend it especially to the American student.

Spanish is a harmonious and beautiful language. In origin it is derived from Latin, the Latin of the legions that in a series of bloody Punic Wars wrested ancient Iberia from the Carthaginians. When Hannibal, the Carthaginian general, opened his daring march on Rome that was to

end in disaster and death, he began hostilities by attacking the Spanish city of Saguntum, an ally of Rome. The Romans eventually took firm control of the Iberian Peninsula, romanized and latinized it to such an extent that in later centuries Spain furnished great emperors like Trajan and Hadrian, and famous authors such the poets Marcial and Lucan, the rhetorician Quintillian, and others.

Roman Spain lasted over seven hundred years. Then, in the fifth century A.D., came the German invasions which destroyed the magnificent cities and swept away much of the classic civilization that had made it the favored province of the Empire. The foundations of feudalism appeared.

The invasion of the African Moors in 711 A.D. gave Spanish the indelible imprint that sets it off from the other Romance tongues. The results of the Moorish occupation – which lasted until 1492 – were, in several respects, as far-reaching as those of the Norman conquest of England. Seven centuries of Moorish domination left their mark on the Spanish language in the form of numerous Arabic words, expressions and place names. It is primarily by these that Spanish and Portuguese differentiate themselves from other Romance tongues. Many Spanish words that begin with "al", – the Arabic article, indicate this Eastern origin: *algebra, almacen (*warehouse), *alfalfa, alcalde* (mayor), to mention only a few.

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Golden Age of Spanish art and literature, the language attained classic vigor and perfection. During this period lived such figures as Cervantes, the immortal author of the novel *Don Quixote;* Fray Luis de Leon, whose exquisite lyrics still charm us; and Lope de Vega, a restless genius who wrote more than two thousand plays.

In the early nineteenth century the Spanish colonies in the Western Hemisphere revolted against the mother country and set up the independent republics that we know today. Simon Bolivar of Venezuela and Jose de San Martin of Argentina were the two great leaders of this movement. Today, Spanish America is important because of the abundance and variety of its raw materials, the rapid growth of industrialization and the outstanding qualities of its statesmen, artists and writers. In size, beauty and brilliant cultural life Mexico City, Havana, Bogota, Lima, Santiago and Buenos Aires challenge the great capitals of the Old World. A number of the Latin American republics are situated at the very frontier of the United States with the result that travel and commerce with them have increased enormously in recent years.

Among the gifted writers of Spanish America who have continued on this side of the Atlantic many of the glorious traditions of Spanish literature are: Sister Juana Ines de la Cruz, a Mexican nun of the colonial period whose poetry is spontaneous and sincere, full of color and light; Ruben Dario, founder of Modernism, the author of incredible books of verse – *Azure, Profane Prose, Songs of Life and Hope* – that contrast with the sadness and disillusionment of his personal life; and Romulo Gallegos, a contemporary Venezuelan writer who became president after winning many laurels as a novelist.

It is interesting to observe that a number of American Indian words were first adopted into Spanish before being anglicized. This was natural since the Spaniards preceded the English in discovering and exploring the New World. We are all familiar with the English or American forms of *chocolate, tomate, maiz, cacao* and *coyote.* Similarly *huracan* has given us "hurricane", *barbacoa* "barbecue" and *hamaca* the English word "hammock".

It should be pointed out that the Spanish-American accent varies somewhat from the Castilian used in the mother country. The former is generally characterized by the softer sound given such letters as *c, z,* and *ll.* This difference, however, is no greater than that which exists between the English of England and that of the United States. Any language of wide distribution is sure to have a certain variety of expression, but these divergencies need not worry us. Spanish speakers in Europe, in America and in Asia are of many races and often seem to merge their backgrounds in an ideal of linguistic unity. They have even devised the term "hispano", which means not "Spanish" but "pertaining to the great Spanish-speaking family".

A variety of gestures accompany the speaking of Spanish and lend color and emphasis to conversation. Thus, for instance, when the thumb and forefinger are brought together to form a circle, perfection is indicated. A beautiful young woman traveling in South America should not be surprised if in one country the young men place the index finger to their cheek, while in another they use the thumb and forefinger to open wide one of their eyes. Both gestures are indicative of their appreciation of feminine charm.

Spanish loses some of its meaning and effectiveness if not accompanied by appropriate gestures.

For Americans, Spanish is a good-neighbor language of great importance. It is also perhaps the easiest of the major Western languages to learn, at least in its early phases. This is due to the relative simplicity of its pronunciation and the limited number of its grammatical rules. Spanish is the golden key which unlocks a treasure house of fascinating information and affords direct communication with the civilization of historic Spain and of the Spanish American republics that stretch seven thousand miles southward from our frontier.

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